



# JOHNSONIAN NEWS LETTER

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## The Annual Bibliography, 1660 - 1800

We have often commented on the great usefulness of the annual *Philological Quarterly* bibliography of English Literature for the Restoration and eighteenth century, compiled by Arthur Friedman (Chicago) and Louis Landa (Princeton). A copy of the 1948 list, which this year has appeared in the July rather than the April issue, has just reached us, and provides the topic for our opening remarks.

This time Friedman and Landa have had the capable assistance of John Loftis (U.C.L.A.), and as usual have drawn on two dozen other scholars for special reviews and comments. The result is a gathering together of 52 pages of bibliography and commentary so valuable that no 18th century scholar can afford not to keep it available for constant consultation. In many ways these yearly compilations are the most valuable tools in our profession.

At times we have heard some criticism of the policy of reviewing books and articles in what ostensibly is merely a check-list of publications. In the beginning, to be sure, the comments were brief — merely attempts to describe or rate certain items as to their scholarly importance and reliability. Gradually descriptions turned into reviews, outside reviewers were called in to help, and the result is the present system where there are some 25 signed reviews, as well as numerous other shorter comments by the editors. The reviews may vary from one short paragraph to several pages of closely packed reasoning.

With such an arrangement, obviously, only some works can be reviewed, the choice at times appearing somewhat arbitrary. Probably every person who uses the bibliography will have a bone to pick with the editors. But this is inevitable. So why worry too much about something which cannot be changed — or at least cannot be changed without major shifts in policy as to space and arrangement? Instead let us recognize the inestimable benefits the present work has for each and every one of us.

In the first place, here is the only place where we can get detailed reviewing of articles. Often an essay may be of more value, or contain more scholarly dynamite, than a half dozen books. But the newspapers, the quarterly journals, are not prepared to review articles as they would separate volumes. Only in the *Philological Quarterly* bibliography is there an opportunity to bring quickly out in the open major differences of opinion or controversial points of interpretation stemming from shorter works.

Moreover, this compilation provides a place where reviewers may concentrate wholly on technical material, with the knowledge that the audience for whom they are writing is equipped to appreciate the detailed arguments. There is no pressure to make the review popular, to appeal to a wide class of readers. Here the commentator can write directly for 18th century specialists, in technical terms, and with no "pulling of punches." Let us thank our lucky stars that we have available such a medium. And let us express our appreciation once again to the editors of *Philological Quarterly*, to Arthur Friedman, Louis Landa, and John Loftis, for their superb job in keeping the project on such a high level of usefulness.

### Advisory Committee for Boswell Edition

President Seymour of Yale University has just announced the formation of an advisory committee of scholars to aid in the huge job of editing the great collection of Boswell papers now in the Yale library. Of the twenty-four scholars named to this committee, twelve are British, one is Dutch, and eleven are from this country. It is thus an international group, picked for specific reasons of usefulness, to aid the four general editors in the years ahead.

Included in the list are: C. Colleer Abbott, Professor of English at the University of Durham; R.W. Chapman of Oxford, now completing his great edition of Johnson's letters; Lord Clinton, of Fettercairn House in Scotland, where one large collection of Boswell's manuscripts was discovered; The Earl of Crawford and Balcarres; W.R. Cunningham, librarian of the University of Glasgow; M.R. Dobie, librarian of the National Library of Scotland; C.A. Malcolm, librarian to the Society of the Writers to the Signet in Edinburgh; L.F. Powell of Oxford, reviser of the Hill edition of the *Life of Johnson*; S.C. Roberts, Master of Pembroke College and now Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University; L.W. Sharp, librarian of the University of Edinburgh; T.B. Simpson, Edinburgh; D. Nichol



Smith, Emeritus Professor of English at Oxford; and Paul S. Breuning, deputy librarian of the University of Utrecht.

Those from the United States are: James T. Babb, librarian of Yale; Thomas G. Bergin, Professor of Romance Languages at Yale; Cleanth Brooks, Professor of English at Yale and one of the general editors of *The Percy Letters*; Lewis P. Curtis, Associate Professor of History at Yale; Arthur A. Houghton Jr. of New York City, a prominent collector; Donald F. Hyde of Somerville, N.J., who with his wife has gathered together the greatest collection of Johnsonian manuscripts in the world; Ralph H. Isham, who is responsible for bringing all the Boswell papers together; W.S. Lewis of Farmington, Conn., general editor of the Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence; Henri M. Peyre, Professor of French at Yale; Chauncey B. Tinker, Emeritus Professor of English at Yale, to whom we largely owe the modern revival of interest in Boswell; and your editor.

### Eighteenth Century Dinner in Honor of George Sherburn

As previously announced in the *JNL*, there will be an 18th century gathering in New York during the Christmas vacation, to which all of our members and friends are invited. The place is the Men's Faculty Club of Columbia University, 400 W. 117th St., New York, N.Y. The time is 7:00 P.M. on the evening of Thursday, December 29 (come early for cocktails at 6:30). The price will be \$3.00, payable at the door. Announcements have been sent out to those who live fairly near New York. If you have not received any notice of the dinner and will be able to attend, please write direct to the *JNL* and make a reservation. Wives and friends will also be welcomed.

For the short program following the dinner Joseph Wood Krutch is to act as Master of Ceremonies. Napier Wilt (Chicago) will talk about George Sherburn and his many friendships; Louis I. Bredvold (Michigan) will discuss the recent interest in 18th century English literature and Sherburn's part in the revival. Directly following will come the presentation of *Pope and His Contemporaries: Essays Presented to George Sherburn*.

### New Light on Pope

One of the most important, and at the same time most controversial, volumes on an 18th century topic to appear in some time is Norman Ault's *New Light on Pope*, published by Methuen in London. No doubt it will stir up continuous arguments for many years to come.

Readers familiar with Ault's approach in the past need not be told that in this volume there is a vast amount of detailed information, together with meaty arguments concerning the possible inclusion of numerous poems into the canon of Pope's works. As heretofore, Ault presents much new evidence, ferreted out with amazing skill, exhibits his wide knowledge of the period at every step, and is often convincing. But for many readers Ault's heavy reliance on parallel passages and internal evidence in clinching attributions will continue to be disturbing. Many of us will probably remain in a state of friendly disbelief until more external evidence can be produced.

In this volume Ault brings together amass of interesting evidence about Pope's relations with Addison, Rowe, Martha Blount, Gay, Swift, Dennis, and Cibber, among others. Always an ardent partisan of Pope, Ault freely throws his punches in every direction. The result is entertaining for scholarly readers — and certainly stimulating. Now for the rebuttals! We can hardly wait!

One chapter on "Mr. Alexander Pope: Painter" contains numerous statistics. Having done a good deal of counting, Ault comes up with some rather startling figures; and older critics who have played down the importance of color in neo-classic poetry are in for a surprise. According to Ault, Pope uses more color-words than any major English poet before him. For example, Shakespeare in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* has 1 to every 47 lines; Donne in his *Progress of the Soul*, 1 to every 58; Milton in *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, 1 to every 21; Denham in *Cooper's Hill*, 1 to every 44; Ambrose Philips in his *Pastorals*, 1 to every 32 — and Pope in *Windsor Forest*, 1 to every 7. Furthermore Ault challenges the claims of scholars who insist on the superiority of Spenser in the use of color terminology. To controvert J.V. Fletcher, who had listed 47 words in Spenser chosen for color sensation, Ault lists over 70 in Pope. As a painter, Pope is shown to revel in descriptions using subtle distinctions of color.

### Other Recent Works on Pope

The autumn of 1949 will go down as a particularly auspicious period in the history of Pope studies. In addition to Ault's volume mentioned above, the following should be mentioned: Peter Quennell has edited an attractive volume of selections, with the title *The Pleasures of Pope*, and containing an appreciative Foreword. On



Dec. 8, so we have been notified, the Clarendon Press in Oxford will publish *Pope and His Contemporaries: Essays Presented to George Sherburn* (exactly when trade copies will reach this country is still uncertain). Included in this volume are numerous studies which we think outstanding. But since we were ourselves so involved in the editing of the work, we are undoubtedly a prejudiced critic. Judge for yourselves! Another extremely important essay which will appear late this month is W.K. Wimsatt's "Rhetoric and Poems: the Example of Pope" in *English Institute Essays, 1948*. We feel sure that those of you who may have been privileged to hear Wimsatt's paper when read at the Institute will agree that this is an analysis which no one interested in 18th century poetry should neglect.

### Edmund Burke

Of interest to all Johnsonians is Thomas W. Copeland's *Our Eminent Friend Edmund Burke* (Yale University Press) — an admirable series of studies of special problems connected with Burke. Of the six chapters, some of the material has appeared elsewhere in another form. Chapter I, "Boswell's Portrait of Burke," is an expansion of an essay with the same title which appeared in *The Age of Johnson*. Chapter III, "A Career in Journalism," covers much of the same ground as Copeland's important article in *PMLA* for March, 1939; and Chapter IV, "A Body of Anonymous Writing," similarly is related to another article in *PMLA* for June, 1942. These were very valuable additions to our knowledge of the little known journalistic concerns of Burke; it is convenient to have all the details gathered together into one reference work.

In other chapters Copeland discusses Burke's reticence about his personal affairs, the attacks on his integrity, his early relations with Tom Paine, "Monsieur Dupont," all from a sympathetic yet judicious point of view. This is no violent partisan polemic. Copeland comes to the old anecdotes, the old slanders, with the proper skeptical attitude, and vigorously attempts to find the truth so far as it can be discovered — no easy task with a man like Burke. All in all, a well written book on an important subject. Frankly, we like it a lot.

### Some Recent Publications

The Warton Lecture on English Poetry at the British Academy was given this year by Bonamy Dobrée (University of Leeds) — his

topic, "The Theme of Patriotism in the Poetry of the Early Eighteenth Century." A copy of the pamphlet reprint from the *Proceedings of the British Academy*, Vol. 35, has just reached us. Among the poets discussed are Prior, Thomson, John Philips, Dyer, and Pope. What Dobrée tries to do, as he admits, is to further break down the old epithet of "artificial" as applied to early 18th century verse, and to show the genuinely moving patriotic spirit which pervades so much of the work of this period.

In an earlier issue we commented on the fact that important scholarly concerns so often come in twos — two editions of Shenstone's letters, two lives of Arthur Murphy, for example, appearing almost at the same time. We are about to witness another example — two important editions of the poems of Christopher Smart. Certainly we have needed an adequate reprinting of Smart's best work — needed it badly for a long time, since the older editions omitted so much that our sensibility finds most attractive. Now there will be no excuse for critics ignoring the religious poetry of Smart, the versifications of the psalms and parables, the charming hymns for the amusement of children. All important poems of Smart (except translations of Horace, Phaedrus, etc. and Latin poems) may be found in the two volume Muses Library *Christopher Smart: the Collected Poems*, recently issued in London by Routledge and Kegan Paul. The volumes have been edited by Norman Callen, who provides an interesting twenty-three page Introduction.

Another edition of *Poems by Christopher Smart* is being published by the Princeton Press (scheduled for late 1949, but now put off until early Spring). This volume has been edited by Robert Brittain, who has made his version somewhat more selective than the two volumes of the Muses Library. Brittain, however, has provided a much more extensive commentary, much more about the life of Smart, so we understand, and a fuller annotation of the texts. It will thus be advisable for scholars to own both editions — the one for completeness, the other for biographical and critical commentary.

Publication No. 19 of The Augustan Reprint Society (Series V, No. 3) is a facsimile of Susanna Centlivre's *The Busie Body* (1709), with an Introduction by Jess Byrd (Salem College). One change in format, which vastly improves the attractiveness of the pamphlets, is the use of veritype for the Introduction rather than typing.



From F. Cordasco comes word of a special limited edition of *The Letters of Tobias George Smollett. A Supplement to the Noyes Collection. With a Bibliography of Editions of the Collected Works.* The collection has been edited by Cordasco, and is to be published (100 copies) in Madrid, Spain, in January. Anyone interested in securing a copy should write to Cordasco, care the English Department of Long Island University, Brooklyn 1, N.Y.

Two inexpensive little English books, not often seen in this country, are Charles Marshall's *Doctor Johnson* (a short popular biography) in the Teaching of English Series by Nelson (1947); and *Doctor Johnson: Some Observations upon Life and Letters*, chosen by John Hayward (Zodiac Books, 1948).

### Texas Studies in English, 1949

In the recent *Studies in English* published by the University of Texas there are a number of essays to be mentioned in the *JNL*. Included are: Powell Stewart "The Loyal London Mercuries" (1682); A.D. McKillop, "Nature and Science in the Works of James Hervey"; Ernest C. Mossner, "Hume and the Ancient-Modern Controversy, 1725-1752: a Study in Creative Scepticism"; R.J. Gallaway, "Biographical Evidence of a Piracy by Edmund Curll."

### An Annotation to Boswell's Tour to the Hebrides

Clarence Tracy (University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, N.B.) writes: "You will remember that on Friday, 15 October, 1773, when Johnson and Boswell were visiting Mull, a Miss M'Lean produced some Erse poems composed by John M'Lean, a local bard, and read and translated two of them for the visitors. Next day Johnson remarked that she was the most accomplished lady that he had found in the Highlands, and the first person that could translate Erse poetry literally. Readers of the *JNL* may be interested in knowing that the MS which she produced that evening was later brought to Canada when the Maclean family emigrated to Nova Scotia, and forms part of the large library of Erse MSS now in the possession of the Reverend Doctor D. Maclean Sinclair minister of the Fort Massey Church, Halifax, N.S. Recently I saw a photostatic copy of the MS and was shown the poem about the two Roman Catholic ladies which Boswell mentions. A description of this collection was published

by Dr. Sinclair in an article on John Maclean in the *Dalhousie Review*. Since the offprint which I have does not give the date or volume number, that is the best bibliographical identification I can give for the moment."

### Junius

In a recent article in the *New York Times* Francesco Cordasco (Long Island University) announces the discovery of a new manuscript note which he believes finally settles the long disputed question of the authorship of the letters of Junius. The note, Cordasco indicates, is in the handwriting of Lord Shelburne and reads: "Let it be known then, once and for all, that my secretary and associate Maclean was 'Junius,' and that the secret now is secret no longer." It was found last June in Glasgow, together with other manuscript material of Lord Shelburne. Since in the past there have been so many definite solutions to the mystery, we will await with interest Cordasco's complete scholarly description of the find. We hope the note will be submitted to various experts to examine the handwriting, water marks of the paper, etc. And more concerning the history of the piece will be welcomed. To be sure, this part of the proof is only a fraction of the labor involved in any conclusive proof, for it must also be shown that Shelburne knew the secret, and that Maclean fits every other requirement. Anyway, the fun has begun all over again.

### Miscellaneous News Items

At Johns Hopkins during November there were three lectures on Johnson given by C.C. Abbott of Durham University, R.D. Havens, and Earl Wasserman of Johns Hopkins. From all accounts the attendance was large and enthusiastic.

At the third annual meeting of the Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association, Nov. 25-26, at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City, Henry Pettit read a paper, "Pope's *Eloisa to Abelard*: a Tragedy of Cartesian Dualism." We will hope to see this soon in print. For the sixth annual meeting of the South-Central M.L.A., scheduled for Little Rock, Ark., Dec. 27-28, there are two papers in particular to interest *JNL* readers: W. Alton Bryant (Miss) "Boswell's Portraits of National Character"; and George W. Meyer (Tulane), "Some Observations on Wordsworth's Debt to Young's 'Night Thoughts'."



We are delighted to hear that the Clarendon Press is planning to reprint Katharine Balderston's two volume edition of *Thraliana*. If anyone of our readers has found misprints, or has any suggestions or corrections for the new edition, please send them at once to Katharine Balderston (Wellesley).

Peter Pineo Chase, Editor of the Rhode Island Medical Journal, writes about Ricketts Restaurant in Chicago, just off North Michigan Boulevard at the intersection where the queer old Waterworks stands. "One room has dark timbered walls and ceiling with John-sonian frescoes and some of his sayings.... The food and drink are very decent and not expensive."

### Personals

James Sutherland (University of London) is to be Visiting Professor of Criticism at Indiana University for the academic year 1950-51.

On August 27 J.R. Moore (Indiana) gave a lecture on Defoe at the Huntington Library.

We have word that the present owner of Dr. Taylor's house in Ashburne, where Dr. Johnson often used to visit, will welcome any American visitors who would like to see the house.

C.A. Miller writes of hearing a fine address by Tom Copeland (Chicago) given for the Boswell Club of Chicago in October.

Irvin Ehrenpreis, who is spending the year in England doing research on Swift, writes from Oxford that he is listening to Herbert Davis's lectures on bibliography. He adds that he has agreed to help do the American end of a project on English translations of Erasmus. "I'd be grateful for a brief request that anyone who knows of American (a) unusual copies of Erasmus in English, (b) libraries specializing in Erasmus, (c) private collectors interested in Erasmus, send the information to me at the Department of English, Indiana University."

### Some Recent Articles

There are three items connected with Dryden: Chandler B. Beall, "A Quaint Conceit from Guarini to Dryden" (concerning the sexual meaning of "die") in *MLN* for November, 1949; Henry H. Adams, "A Note on the Date of a Dryden Letter" in *MLN* for December; and Sarah L.C. Clapp, "Jacob Tonson, Eminent Hand" in *The Library Chronicle of the University of Texas* for Summer, 1949.

Concerned with the early part of the century are: Robert C. Elliott, "Swift's 'Little' Harrison, Poet and Continuator of the *Tatler*," in *SP* for October; F.H. Heinemann, "John Toland, France, Holland, and Dr. Williams" in *RES* for October; J.R. Moore, "Steele's' Unassigned Tract against the Earl of Oxford" in *PQ* for July; I.P. Watt, "The Naming of Characters in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding" in *RES* for October; Charles B. Woods, "Fielding's Epilogue for Theobald" in *PQ* for July. Also to be mentioned is Emile Pons' review of the *Journal to Stella* edited by Harold Williams in *RES* for October.

Other articles are: Nancy Moore, "David Hartley: the Bicentenary of 'Observations on Man' 1749" in *The Hibbert Journal* for October; G. Blakemore Evans, "The Text of Johnson's *Shakespeare* (1765)" in *PQ* for July; Spire Pitou, "Richelet, Forerunner of Samuel Johnson and De Lormes" in *MLN* for November; Lewis Leary, "Joel Barlow and William Hayley: a Correspondence" in *American Literature* for November.

We owe the following to two helpful subscribers: David Erdman lets us know of his "William Blake's Debt to James Gillray" in *The Art Quarterly* for Spring 1949; and Rudolf Kirk calls our attention to "Clerical Incomes in Eighteenth Century England" in *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church* for September. We hope other subscribers will keep us in mind concerning 18th century articles in out-of-the-way periodicals.

### New Johnsonian References

From Mrs. S.C. Webster (205 W. 57th St., New York City) come some interesting excerpts from a manuscript autobiography of John Webb, one of her ancestors. Webb, who lived in Haverhill, England, was born in 1768.

In July 1790 Webb met a Mary Frances Petter, who was a sprightly young lady from London; then on August 4 he heard an account of her early years. In describing her life when she lived with a Mrs. Pearse, she said: "The celebrated Peter Pindar used to visit there. He oft gave Mrs. Pearse his poems to read, and would say what do you think of them Miss. Why I think sir, they are too bad. Not at all he reply'd, if it were in my power they should be more keen.

"She also told me she knew Dr. Johnson, had read to him many times, and that he gave her a Copy of his Dictionary and charged her to keep it clean, she had got a portrait of the Doctor, when he was about twenty with his hair hanging in ratstails.



"She also knew Mrs. Williams the blind Poetess, who lived with him, 'I often went to see her, and sometimes carried her Cherries, she would ask me how many there were and weighed them after me, to see if I had eat any. Her custom was to sleep in her Cloathes. Before her Death, she said, all she had came from Charity, and should return to Charity again. She left what she had to Charitable Uses.'"

### Queries

Fritz Liebert (Yale) writes: "A bundle I recently purchased at auction has yielded a Johnsonianum of which I can find no previous record: a second edition of the Doctor's *Memoirs of the King of Prussia*. The octavo of 1786, a reprint from the *Literary Magazine* but the first edition in book form, has long been familiar. The new book is a duodecimo published by T. Carnan in 1787, which squeezes Johnson's memoir into 62 pages of small type, omitting the continuation by Mavor that swells the octavo, and plainly designed at its sixpence price to appeal to the pamphlet market. I would be grateful for news of other copies of what seems to be a scarce little book, and for any information about the circumstances of its publication."

Recently your editor ran across mention of a leaflet printed in 1810 in London, describing the organization and constitution of "The London Rasselas Society," which had been formed that year. Article 16 of the Constitution provided that the Society dine at the Mitre Tavern, Fleet St., every year on September 18. The first President was James Biggs, who wrote the "Life of Miranda." This is all we have been able to discover about this society. Can any of our readers provide additional information? We would like to know more about this forerunner of our present Johnson societies.

### A Suggestion

John Harold Hutchins (C.C.N.Y.) suggests that many of our readers may have small research problems involving material in English libraries, and would like to have the names of professional research workers who, for a reasonable fee, would be willing to look up the references. Will any of you who can supply such names and addresses please send them in to the *JNL* for inclusion in the next issue. We would particularly like to list research workers available at the

British Museum, The Public Record Office, The Bodleian, and other important libraries and public offices. If possible we would like to compile a list of responsible professional helpers in England familiar with 18th century research.

### Johnson Cuff Links

As a present for a few people who had helped in the negotiations leading up to the acquisition by Yale of the Boswell Papers, Ralph Isham recently had specially designed some beautiful gold cuff links. Embossed on one half of each link is a profile of Dr. Johnson. Engraved on the other half is, in one instance, the legend "Cast from original in Malahide Castle — 1946 acquisition"; and in the second instance "'Dr. Johnson engraved by Mr. Burch, for Dr. Burney, Junr.'" The relief was derived from a somewhat larger seal carefully saved by Boswell.

Produced by the firm of Neiman-Marcus in Dallas, the links were never designed for general sale. Indeed, Col. Isham stipulated that the links could never be advertised to the general public. But he has given permission to the firm to supply sets to any ardent Johnsonians who would relish the superb workmanship and the literary associations. What the price will be has not yet been determined. If any of our readers is interested, however, he should write to Mr. Stanley Marcus, Neiman-Marcus, Co., Dallas, Texas.

### Editions of Sterne

In England there have been a number of recent reprintings of the novels of Sterne. *Friestram Shandy* appears in the Chiltern Classics with an Introduction by Peter Quennell; *A Sentimental Journey* has been issued by Paul Elek with an Introduction by Phoebe Gaye; by the Folio Society with an essay by Oliver Warner; and by Macdonald with an Introduction by John Cowper Powys.